

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the above amendments and the following remarks.

At the outset, the Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication in the Final Office Action that claims 1, 2, 4-8, 12 and 13 are allowed and that claim 3 is directed to allowable subject matter and would be allowed if amended to overcome the objection under 37 CFR 1.75(c) and to be placed in independent form.

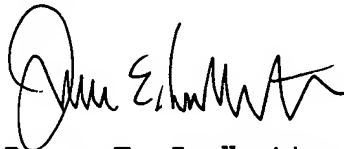
In view of the indication of allowability, claim 3 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 14 to include the features of its base and intervening claims, without the language objected to in the Final Office Action. New claim 14 has been carefully drafted to avoid the issue underlying the objection to claim 3.

Claim 3 and non-elected, withdrawn claims 9-11 have been canceled.

In view of the above, it is submitted that all pending objections and rejections are now moot and that this application is in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James E. Ledbetter', with a stylized, cursive script.

James E. Ledbetter
Registration No. 28,732

Date: April 6, 2006
JEL/DWW/att

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